

Attorneys hired by city

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The Sunnyside City Council approved public defense contracts with Saxon Riley, PLLC and the Law Office of Beck and Phillips, PLLC at Monday's meeting, which will cost the city \$250,000 annually.

The contracts, noted Mayor Jim Restucci, are necessary because the Washington State Supreme Court made a decision to limit legal caseloads for public defense attorneys.

He was the lone council member to vote against the contracts.

Restucci said his dissenting vote does not reflect his opinion of the two legal firms.

Restucci said he was voting in protest because it is his belief that the legislature should make all decisions regarding how taxpayer funds are used, whereas it was a court that foisted the issue upon municipal governments.

The Washington State Supreme Court decided public defenders shall not have more than 400 cases or case equivalents per year.

The remaining six members of the Sunnyside City Council voted in favor of the contracts with Saxon Riley, PLLC and the Law Office of Beck and Phillips, PLLC.